

of the most significant is an end to the “slots” rules that restrict access to O’Hare, LaGuardia, and John F. Kennedy International airports. The restrictions will be eased almost immediately, and then ended completely in 2002 in Chicago and in 2007 in New York City. This Act also substantially achieves a second Administration proposal to enhance competition. We proposed allowing a \$2 increase in the current \$3-per-segment Passenger Facility Charge, with a condition that a “dominated hub” airport provide a competition plan that lays out how new entrants and other competing carriers can be included in the airport facility plans. This bill includes the requirement for a competition plan and a \$1.50 increase. Because effective competition has not worked as well on lightly traveled routes (with resulting high fares), we endorsed the Senate’s rural air service pilot program that is substantially adopted in this Act.

This legislation provides benefits to passengers and the aviation community, and represents a first step toward our long-term objectives for modernization and stability of FAA’s critical air traffic control services. I thank the Members of Congress who led the 3-year effort to enact this bill, and I am pleased to sign it into law.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
April 5, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 1000, approved April 5, was assigned Public Law No. 106–181.

### **Statement on Signing the Wendell H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century**

*April 5, 2000*

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 1000, the “Wendell H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century.” This legislation contains important measures to improve aviation safety, increase airline competition, protect air travelers with disabilities, and boost assistance for the families of victims of aviation disasters. The bill also takes an additional step toward our long-term objectives for modernizing and reforming the

FAA’s provision of critical air traffic control services.

I call on Congress to join me in moving forward to further system-wide reform of air traffic control. While this legislation seeks to provide substantial funding guarantees for airport construction and other capital investment, I remain concerned about the possible effect of the bill’s procedural requirements on future appropriations for air traffic control and other crucial safety functions funded by the FAA’s Operations account. My administration will work with the Congress to achieve more balanced funding of aviation programs in fiscal year 2001.

NOTE: H.R. 1000, approved April 5, was assigned Public Law No. 106–181.

### **Statement on the Conclusion of the Independent Counsel’s Investigation of Alexis Herman**

*April 5, 2000*

I am very pleased to learn that Independent Counsel Ralph Lancaster has concluded his investigation. Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman has for many years served our Nation with selfless dedication and extraordinary talent. She did not deserve what she has had to endure over the past many months. As I said at the start of this inquiry, nearly 2 years ago, Secretary Herman did nothing wrong. But throughout it all, she was never deterred from her mission: making life better for America’s working families. I am proud to call her my friend, and I am honored that she has been willing to work in this administration on behalf of working people everywhere.

### **Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report on Hazardous Materials Transportation**

*April 5, 2000*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

I herewith transmit the Department of Transportation’s Biennial Report on Hazardous Materials Transportation for Calendar

Years 1996-1997. The report has been prepared in accordance with the Federal hazardous materials transportation law, 49 U.S.C. 5121(e).

**William J. Clinton**

**Letter to Congressional Leaders  
Transmitting a Report on the Korean  
Peninsula Energy Development  
Organization**

*April 5, 2000*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I transmit herewith the 6-month report required under the heading "International Organizations and Programs" in title IV of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104-107), relating to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO).

Sincerely,

**William J. Clinton**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Mitch McConnell, chairman, and Patrick Leahy, ranking member, Senate Committee on Rules and Administration; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdensen, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; and Sonny Callahan, chairman, and Nancy Pelosi, House Committee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs.

**Interview With Dan Rather of the  
"CBS Evening News"**

*April 6, 2000*

**Mr. Rather.** First of all, thanks for doing this.

**The President.** Glad to.

**Elían Gonzalez**

**Mr. Rather.** I want to talk to you about guns, gun legislation. But the day's news is on Elían Gonzalez. His father is here; the

boy's father is here. How soon can he expect to see the child?

**The President.** Well, first, I think we should say it's a good thing that he's here. I'm glad he's here. And the Justice Department is working on that, and I think in a way we're fortunate to have an Attorney General who understands this issue, because Janet Reno was the prosecutor in Dade County for many years. And they're working on it. I don't know, I can't answer with any specifics. But I have confidence that they'll do the best they can to handle it in an expeditious and sensitive way.

**Mr. Rather.** "In an expeditious and sensitive way." Mr. President, from almost all other citizens, if the Immigration Service rules, and a Federal judge backs the ruling, then people will obey the law. What's happened here?

**The President.** Well, I think the people—you can ask them; they can speak for themselves better than I do. But they, I think they feel that they're not sure that the process was adequate since it occurred in Cuba. I think that's basically what's going on.

And you know, some of the people there are just against anybody going back to Cuba. But I think there are a lot of people who have genuine questions about it. And I think the fact that the father has come here and will be in a position to show his concern for and desire to be reunited with his son should be a big help. And as I said, I think the Justice Department will do a good job here, and I think Attorney General Reno really understands what's going on. And I think we'll work through it.

**Mr. Rather.** You have consistently said that the father speaks for the son. You stand by that?

**The President.** Well, that's the decision that was made by the INS. They went down and interviewed the father extensively. And they concluded that based on his previous contacts, which were regular, with his son, that he was a fit representative to speak for his son. And under our law, since Elían Gonzalez is a very young child, someone must be the designated person to speak for him. And under our law, the parent, as long as he is a fit parent, is that person.